

**Unusual mating of *Pyronia tithonus* L. with *Maniola jurtina* L.  
(Lep.: Nymphalidae)**

On 27 July 1997 whilst out walking with the dog at Daventry, Northamptonshire, I was somewhat surprised to encounter a female Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus* in copula with a male Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*. I was fortunate in being able to observe them for several minutes, even coaxing them, obligingly, to walk onto my finger for a closer inspection, so that there can be no possibility of confusion over the identity of the individuals involved. After a while, the pair flew away, still firmly "bonded". Typically, I had no camera with me!

In captivity, cross-pairings of Lepidoptera within the same family may often be obtained artificially, for example between the Eyed Hawk-moth *Smerithus ocellata* L. and the Poplar Hawk-moth *Laothoe populi* L. Such cross-pairings in the wild are far less common, though not unheard of. Our editor, Colin Plant, informs me that he has in his collection a male *M. jurtina* taken in copula with a female Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*, collected at the Mardyke, South Essex by the late Sydney Bowden on 1 July 1943. Though the pairing of a satyrid with a nymphalid seems unexpected, one is mindful of the current taxonomic thinking that our "browns" are merely a subfamily (Satyrinae) within the Nymphalidae and one can't help wondering if this is supporting evidence for that line of thought. The fact that each case involved a male *M. jurtina* should not be overlooked and it would be interesting to discover if this note prompts any other observations to be recorded in these pages.

The progeny of such cross-pairings within insects are generally referred to as "sports" and one wonders if any such sports may be found in the Daventry area next season!- K.F. WILLIAMS, "Craignester", 11 Gable Close, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 4EX.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: I will be pleased to receive further notes concerning observations on **naturally occurring** cross-pairings in British Lepidoptera, though if a large number are received I reserve the right to combine these into a single article with all contributors duly acknowledged.

---

---

***Atolmis rubricollis* L.(Lep.:Arctiidae) in Main Argyll (VC 98)**

On 9 June 1997 while exploring the Dalavich Oakwood Forest Nature Reserve by Loch Awe (OS grid ref. NM 967135) I spotted a single example of this unmistakable moth at rest amongst low herbage. Although mainly a speciality of south-western Britain, it is known from a scatter of records along the west side of Scotland. Scottish records are nonetheless very scarce and this recent sighting merits publication.- KEITH N.A. ALEXANDER, 14 Partridge Way, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1BQ.